

MINUTES
CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
Civic Auditorium/Commission Chambers
1507 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach, Florida 33785
Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present:

- Commissioner Hilary King
- Commissioner John Bigelow
- Commissioner Jude Bond
- Vice Mayor-Commissioner Janet Wilson
- Mayor-Commissioner Denise Houseberg

Also present: City Manager Ryan Henderson, City Clerk Lorin Kornijtschuk, Public Works Director Dean Scharmen, and City Attorney Matthew Maggard.

For continuity, items are listed in agenda order, although not necessarily discussed in that order.

OATH OF OFFICE

City Attorney Matthew Maggard administered the oath of office to newly appointed City Manager Ryan Henderson. Mr. Henderson took the oath, swearing to support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States, the State of Florida, and the City of Indian Rocks Beach.

1. PRESENTATIONS

A. Proclamation - Veterans Recognition

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg read a proclamation recognizing local veterans and their service to the country.

B. Report of Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

A representative from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office reported on activities for the month. Deputies responded to 731 events, with the most common being directed patrols, house checks, and beach patrols. A total of 163 traffic stops were conducted. Crime statistics remain favorable, with most incidents being domestic-related. One noise complaint was addressed at Cocos during their Crab Fest weekend event, which was resolved appropriately. No further issues were reported.

C. Report of Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District

Fire Chief Ken Grimes reported a busy month with 26 EMS calls and 14 fire calls. Two significant fire incidents occurred:

- **Boat Fire:** A boat fire near the marina was successfully extinguished using the department's fireboat with fire pump capability. Multiple agencies responded, including the Largo Fire Department and the Clearwater Fire Department. Flames were visible from the north bridge. The response prevented potential spread to nearby structures.
- **Holiday Inn Fire:** A dryer fire in the laundry room produced smoke and required multiple units to respond.

Chief Grimes highlighted a successful stroke call where the patient was transported to a comprehensive center within the critical three-hour window, potentially reversing the stroke effects. He emphasized the importance of rapid response times.

Station Updates:

- The department is working on relocating stations along the beach
- Exploring the acquisition of property at Church of the Isles for the northern station location
- Considering Tiki Gardens' location for the southern station with county cooperation
- Middle station (downtown Indian Rocks Beach) will be renovated in place
- Groundbreaking held Saturday for new mainland station in the Oakhurst area

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Theo Wilson, 444 Harbor Drive South**, spoke about the need for contributions to Wreaths Across America for Bay Pine Cemetery. Flags were placed in May but were damaged during the hurricane. The deadline for ordering wreaths is December 1st, with delivery scheduled by December 13th. Flyers with the website were made available.
- **Nellie Johnson, 215 15th Avenue**, inquired about recycling services, questioning whether recycling materials are actually being separated from regular garbage despite the city paying approximately \$500,000 for the service. Public Works Director Dean Scharmen clarified that the city provides solid waste

services on Monday and Thursday (red and white trucks) and has a separate contract for recycling services.

- **Elizabeth Flynn, 914 Harbor House Drive**, provided updates on behalf of the Friends of Indian Rocks Beach Library:
 - Received an anonymous donation of \$5,000 from an IRB resident in memory of Jean Scott for purchasing library books
 - Awarded \$10,000 McDonald's Golden Grant (requested \$2,500) to fund a 12-month Florida Explorer Story Hour program focusing on literacy and the local marine ecosystem
 - Will partner with local conservation and science organizations
 - Grant presentation scheduled for November 19th at 11:00 A.M.
 - Previously received \$15,000 from Rotary Club for children's area; working with the club, librarian Lee Miller, and the city on allocation
 - Library work is in progress; goal to reopen end of year or early 2026
 - Not currently accepting used book donations

Ms. Flynn also raised safety concerns about golf carts on Gulf Boulevard, including unlicensed carts, minors driving, open containers, and dangerous passing maneuvers. She requested better education about golf cart regulations.

- **Steve Calamacy**, representing the VFW (non-resident, lives in Seminole), thanked the city for its integration and participation in VFW activities, including the recent concert, and presented recognition to the Commission for their support.

Public comment was closed by Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg.

3. REPORTS OF:

A. City Attorney -- Matthew Maggard

City Attorney Maggard reported significant developments in litigation:

Modco of Kentucky Inc. Case:

- Judge granted the city's motion for summary judgment today
- Case dismissed with prejudice (cannot be refiled)
- Jury trial scheduled for later this year was cancelled
- Case challenged the constitutionality of the city's short-term rental ordinance
- The possibility of appeal to the Second District Court of Appeals exists, but Attorney Maggard expressed confidence in prevailing if appealed
- City may discuss seeking attorney's fees and potential waiver of appeal rights

Magistrate Appeals:

- Multiple magistrate orders have been appealed to the circuit court's appellate division
- Three-judge panel appointed
- Briefs have been filed
- Oral arguments not anticipated (only one case in history allowed oral arguments)
- Awaiting decisions, which are expected to be issued simultaneously

Short-Term Rental Enforcement Update:

- Enforcement proceeding with voluntary compliance increasing
- Special magistrate hearings held in October, more scheduled for tomorrow
- Two additional hearing dates are being scheduled for January
- Fines and penalties are significantly reduced for those who voluntarily come into compliance before special magistrate hearings
- Enforcement prioritizes properties with no compliance efforts, then those that fell out of compliance
- Limited staff capacity means citations are issued systematically, not all at once
- Previous non-enforcement does not constitute a waiver of ordinance requirements

Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson inquired about other pending lawsuits questioning the constitutionality. Attorney Maggard confirmed federal court cases remain pending or on hold, with the AP6 case in active litigation and a Bert Harris claim also filed by AP6. A shade meeting may not be necessary at this time.

B. City Manager -- Ryan Henderson

City Manager Henderson addressed the Commission for the first time in his official capacity:

- Thanked the Commission for their confidence in appointing him
- Acknowledged the privilege of serving as city manager
- Completed three weeks; met numerous neighbors
- Invited residents to meet him after the meeting

Recognition:

- Recognized former City Manager Greg Mims for leaving the organization better than he found it. He praised the staff Mr. Mims assembled
- Thanked previous Finance Director Dan Carpenter for preparing him for the role and wished Mr. Carpenter success in his new position

Upcoming Initiatives:

- **Paid/Managed Parking:** Will bring item to Commission in December to determine next steps for early 2026 rollout

"Neighbor Service" Initiative:

- Announced organizational shift from "customer service" to "neighbor service"
- Staff will refer to community members as "neighbors" rather than citizens, residents, or customers
- Language change reflects the philosophy that "we're all in this together."
- Will see implementation throughout city communications (e.g., "neighbor comments" instead of "public comments")
- Emphasized preserving and enhancing what makes Indian Rocks Beach special

C. City Commission

Commissioner King:

- Informed residents about Pinellas County grant of \$813 million+ for hurricane recovery
- Grant covers Hurricanes Idalia, Helene, and Milton
- Categories include:
 - Reimbursement for displacement rent
 - Offsetting costs not covered by insurance or FEMA
 - Rebuild assistance, particularly for elevation projects
- At least 29 Indian Rocks Beach residents have applied

Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson:

- Attended the second meeting of the Development Code Compliance and Redevelopment Committee for the Florida League of Cities
- Priority issues include housing within the Live Local Act and ADU legislation
- Specifically reviewing Senate Bill 180 for potential amendments
- Completed advocacy training sessions with Jennifer Webb (former House Representative, District 69, 2018-2020) through Suncoast League of Cities
- Will participate in the Tallahassee delegation in January
- Training will enable effective advocacy for both Suncoast League and individual city issues

Commissioner Bond: No report.

Commissioner Bigelow:

- Reported significant construction activity on Harbor Drive North and South
- Code enforcement addressed Sunday construction violations
- Modular home delivery scheduled for Harbor Drive North the following day
- The house will require a crane for placement

- City Manager Henderson confirmed awareness; company is Safe Side Homes

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg:

Announced upcoming holiday events:

- **December 5th:** Annual Tree Lighting at 12th Avenue, 7:00 P.M.
- **December 7th:** Street Parade, 1:00 P.M.
- **December 20th:** Boat Parade, 7:00 P.M.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

City Attorney Maggard read the Consent Agenda items:

- A.** Approval of October 14, 2025, Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes
- B.** Proclamation: Veterans of Foreign Wars "Buddy" Poppy

Motion: Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as written.

Second: Commissioner King.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

6. OTHER LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

A. Ordinance No. 2025-05 -- PUBLIC HEARING / SECOND READING Appropriating funds for operating expenses and adopting a budget amendment for the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, for Fiscal year 2024-25

City Attorney Maggard read the ordinance title: Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Pinellas County, Florida, appropriating funds for operating expenses and adopting a budget amendment for fiscal year 2024 through 2025 and providing for an effective date.

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg opened the public hearing. No questions were raised by the Commission or the public.

Public comment was closed by Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg.

Motion: Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson motioned to approve Ordinance 2025-05 adopting a budget amendment for the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, for fiscal year 2024 to 2025.

Second: Commissioner King.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

B. Resolution No. 2025-13: Check Signatories

City Attorney Maggard read the resolution title: Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, authorizing the City Manager and the City Clerk to be added as signatories on behalf of the city for all financial accounts, removing the former City Manager and Finance Director as signatories, and providing an effective date.

Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg opened the public hearing. No questions were raised by the Commission or the public.

Public comment was closed by Mayor-Commissioner Houseberg.

Motion: Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson motioned to approve Resolution 2025-13, changing the check signatories.

Second: Commissioner Bond.

Ayes: Bigelow, Bond, King, Wilson, Houseberg

Nay: None

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 5-0

7. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Vice Mayor-Commissioner Wilson motioned to adjourn the meeting at **6:50 P.M.**

Second: Commissioner Bigelow.

Vote: Unanimous approval by acclamation.

Date Approved _____

Denise Houseberg, Mayor-Commissioner

Attest: _____
Lorin A. Kornijtschuk, City Clerk